

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for automatically providing credit to an account of a communications services subscriber when communications services of the subscriber are interrupted, the method comprising:

- detecting an interruption in communication services of the subscriber;
- generating a communications interrupted message describing the detected interruption in communication services of the subscriber;
- transmitting the communications interrupted message;
- generating a credit account message based on the communications interruption interrupted message;
- transmitting the credit account message to a billing center; and
- applying a credit to the account of the subscriber based on the credit account message.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

- generating a subscriber notification message describing the credit; and
- transmitting the subscriber notification message to user equipment of the subscriber.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 further comprising:

- storing the generated subscriber notification until communications services are reestablished with the user equipment of the subscriber.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein detecting the interruption in the communication services of the subscriber comprises:

- noting a lack of response from the user equipment of the subscriber;
- noting a time of the lack of response; and
- declaring the communication services of the subscriber interrupted when a difference between the noted time and a current time exceeds a predetermined value.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein detecting the interruption in the communication services of the subscriber comprises:

detecting the interruption in the communication services of the subscriber at a cell site serving the user equipment of the subscriber.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein generating the communications interrupted message comprises:

generating the communications interrupted message describing the interruption in communication services of the subscriber at the cell site serving the user equipment of the subscriber.

7. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein transmitting the communications interrupted message comprises:

transmitting the communications interrupted message from the cell site to a mobile switching center serving the user equipment of the subscriber.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein applying the credit to the account of the subscriber comprises:

generating a call data record applying credit to the account of the subscriber.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein applying the credit to the account of the subscriber comprises:

crediting air time to the account of the subscriber.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein applying the credit to the account of the subscriber comprises:

applying a monetary credit to the account of the subscriber.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein applying the credit to the account of the subscriber comprises:

determining a credit type preference of the subscriber; and

applying a credit to the account of the subscriber based on the

determined credit type preference of the subscriber.

12. (Currently Amended) A system operative to automatically apply a credit to an account of a communications services subscriber, the system comprising;

an interruption event processor operative to generate and transmit a credit account message to direct the application of credit to the account of the communications services subscriber based on a description of a communications interruption event involving the subscriber received in a communications interrupted message; and

a dropped call detector operative to detect a communications interruption event involving user equipment of the subscriber and to provide the description of the dropped call event to the interruption event processor in the communications interrupted message.

13. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 12 further comprising:

a subscriber database including a record ~~indicated~~ indicating a credit type preference of the subscriber wherein the interruption event processor is operative to read the record indicating the credit type preference of the subscriber and direct an application of a credit according to the read preference.

14. (Original) The system of claim 12 further comprising:

a notification processor operative to direct the generation of a notification message informing the subscriber that credit is being applied to the account of the subscriber.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14 further comprising:

a message storage device operative to store the notification message at least until communications services are restored to the user equipment of the subscriber and the notification message is delivered to the user equipment of the subscriber.

16. (Original) The system of claim 12 wherein the interruption event processor is operative to calculate a credit amount based on information received in

the description of the dropped call event.

17. (Original) The system of claim 12 wherein the interruption event processor is further operative to calculate a credit amount based on information received in the description of the dropped call event and information received from a subscriber record associated with the subscriber.

18. (Currently Amended) A system for automatically providing credit to an account of a communications services subscriber when communications services of the subscriber are interrupted, the system comprising:

- means for detecting an interruption in communication services of the subscriber;

- means for generating a communications interrupted message describing the detected interruption in communication services of the subscriber;

- means for transmitting the communications interrupted message;

- means for generating a credit account message based on the communications ~~interruption~~ interrupted message;

- means for transmitting the credit account message to a billing center;

and

- means for applying a credit to the account of the subscriber based on the credit account message.

19. (Original) The system of claim 18 further comprising:

- means for generating a subscriber notification message describing the credit; and,

- means for transmitting the subscriber notification message to user equipment of the subscriber.

20. (Original) The system of claim 19 further comprising:

- means for storing the generated subscriber notification until communications services are reestablished with the user equipment of the subscriber.

21. (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein the means for detecting the

interruption in the communication services of the subscriber comprises:

- means for noting a lack of response from the user equipment of the subscriber;

- means for noting a time of the lack of response;

- means for declaring the communication services of the subscriber interrupted when a difference between the noted time and a current time exceeds a predetermined value.

22. (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein the means for applying the credit to the account of the subscriber comprises:

- means for generating a call data record applying credit to the account of the subscriber.

23. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the means for applying the credit to the account of the subscriber comprises:

- means for determining a credit type preference of the subscriber; and

- means for applying a credit to the account of the subscriber based on the determined credit type preference of the subscriber.

24. (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein the means for detecting the interruption in the communication services of the subscriber comprises:

- means for noting a signal strength from the user equipment of the subscriber;

- means for comparing the signal strength to a threshold signal strength;

and,

- means for declaring the communication services of the subscriber interrupted when the signal strength falls below the threshold signal strength.

25. (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein the means for detecting the interruption in the communication services of the subscriber comprises:

- means for noting a signal strength from the user equipment of the subscriber;

- means for comparing the signal strength to a threshold signal strength;

and,

means for declaring the communication services of the subscriber interrupted when the signal strength falls below the threshold signal strength for a predetermined period of time.

26. (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein the means for detecting the interruption in the communication services of the subscriber comprises:

means for noting a signal strength from the user equipment of the subscriber;

means for comparing the signal strength to a threshold signal strength;

and,

means for declaring the communication services of the subscriber interrupted when the signal strength falls below the threshold signal strength with at least a predetermined frequency.

27. (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein the means for detecting the interruption in the communication services of the subscriber comprises:

means for noting a signal strength from the user equipment of the subscriber;

means for comparing the signal strength to a threshold signal strength;

and,

means for declaring the communication services of the subscriber interrupted when the signal strength falls below the threshold signal strength with a predetermined number of times.